



Apple Developer



A Guide to Family Sharing

Overview

With Family Sharing, up to six members of a single family (e.g. adults and children) can share their iTunes, iBooks and App Store purchases, family photos, a family calendar, location and more. It's the easy way to share and coordinate with the people closest to you and help bring harmony to your family's digital life.

Setting Up Family Sharing

To set up Family Sharing, one adult in your household—the family organizer—invites up to five additional family members and agrees to pay for any iTunes, iBooks, and App Store purchases those family members initiate while part of the Family.

You can accept a Family Sharing invitation from any compatible iOS device or Mac where you are signed into iCloud. Or, if the organizer is nearby, they can simply ask you to enter your iCloud Apple ID and password during the setup process. To complete setup, you will also confirm the Apple ID you use for the iTunes, iBooks, and App Stores so you can share your purchases with family members. This can be the same Apple ID you use for iCloud, or a different one.

Once you join, the features of Family Sharing are set up on your compatible devices automatically.

Sharing iTunes, iBooks, and App Store Purchases

With Family Sharing, family members get immediate access to each others' music, movies, TV shows, books, and apps, and can download them to their own devices any time they like.* Just visit Purchased in the iTunes Store, iBooks Store, or App Store, select the family member whose collection you would like to browse, and then download or play the content you want. Other family members can access your collection in the same way.

You can also choose to [hide individual purchases](#) so that other family members will not be able to view or download them.

Family Purchases and Ask to Buy

When a family member initiates a new purchase, it is billed directly to the family organizer's account, unless the family member has gift or store credit sufficient to cover the entire amount. Once purchased, the item is added to the initiating family member's account and shared with the rest of the family group. If Family Sharing is ever disabled, each member will keep the items they chose to purchase—even if they were paid for by the family organizer.

To control spending by kids, the organizer can turn on Ask to Buy for any family member who is not an adult to require approval for any purchase or free download requests. When a purchase is initiated, a notification will be sent to the family organizer who can review the item and approve or decline the request right from their own device. It's a great way to give kids the freedom to make their own choices while still controlling their spending.

Sharing Family Photos

When Family Sharing is set up, a new [shared stream](#) called Family is automatically created in the Photos app on all family members' devices. Everyone in the family can contribute photos, videos, and comments to the stream, and get notified whenever something new is added. It's a great way to exchange photos and share memories with the people closest to you.

Family Calendar and Reminders

Family Sharing also sets up a new family calendar that is shared by all family members and appears in the Calendar app on everyone's devices. Family members can view the calendar, add or modify events, and receive notifications and alerts to help everyone stay coordinated. They will also be able to use the Reminders app to set time- or location-specific reminders that will be delivered to everyone in the Family.

Sharing Your Location

When you join a Family, you will begin sharing your location with each of your other family members automatically. This allows you to use [Find My Friends](#) or the Messages app on iOS 8 to help you meet at a specific location, see when a family member is nearby, or just make sure a child is where they are supposed to be.

If you need privacy, you can stop sharing your location temporarily by disabling the Share My Location switch in iCloud Settings. Or, stop sharing your location with specific friends or family members permanently by removing them from your location sharing list.

Find My iPhone

With Family Sharing and Find My iPhone, any family member can help locate any other member's missing device. Everyone's devices appear in a single list in the Find My iPhone app, which makes it easier than ever to locate a child's misplaced iPad or help a family member secure a device that has been lost or stolen.

If you prefer, you can hide your devices from family members by turning off Show My Devices in your Family Sharing settings.

Apple IDs for Kids

Children under 13 can also participate in Family Sharing. As a parent or legal guardian, the family organizer can provide verified parental consent for a child to have their own Apple ID, and create it on the child's behalf. Once the account is created, it will be added to the Family automatically.

Children enjoy the same features as other family members and, by default, have access to the same music, movies, TV shows, books, and apps. You can limit what content your children have access to on the devices they use via [Restrictions](#) on an iOS device or Parental Controls on [OS X](#) and [iTunes](#). Ask to Buy is enabled by default for children under 13.

Leaving Family Sharing

When you leave Family Sharing, your account is removed from the family group and you immediately stop sharing music, movies, TV shows, books, and apps with any remaining family members.

Any DRM-protected music, movies, TV shows, books, or apps you previously downloaded from other family members' collections will no longer be usable, and other family members will no longer be able to use content downloaded from your collection. If you have made In-App Purchases from an app originally purchased by someone else, you will need to purchase the app yourself to regain access to your In-App Purchases.

In addition, family photos, calendar, and reminders will be removed from your devices, you will stop sharing your location with other family members, and your devices will be removed from the family Find My iPhone device list.

Rules and System Requirements

Family Sharing is designed to be used by a single family (e.g. adults and children). You can be part of only one family group at a time, and may only switch to a different family group twice per year. The features of Family Sharing may vary based on country and content eligibility. For more information see the [iCloud Terms and Conditions](#).

Family Sharing requires iCloud, and works with the following software and operating systems:

- iOS 8
- OS X 10.10
- Find My Friends 3.0
- Find My iPhone 3.1
- iCloud for Windows 4.0

Not all content types are available in all countries. All family members must use the same iTunes Store country or region. Music, movies, TV shows, and books can be downloaded to up to 10 devices per account, only five of which can be computers. Apps can be downloaded to any devices the family member owns or controls.